THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) and (c) In September, 1993, STC finalised contracts for import of 30,000 tonnes of Palmolein for delivery by mid-October from its empenelled suppliers of edible oils who have been supplying edilible oils in the past also. These contracts are reported to have been concluded at prices lower than the ruling market price for October delivery.

(d) and (e) Our attention has been drawn to some news items which have appeared in the newspapers on this issue. The Central Vigilance Commission has also made a reference on this issue to the STC for an early enquiry and report. The enquiry is in progress.

Indo-Indonesian Trade Talks

*55. SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA:

SHRI ANANT RAM JAISWAL:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Indo-Indonesian bilateral trade talks were held recently; and

(b) if so, what are the areas of trade between the two countries that were covered and what is the outcome of the talks?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) No, Sir. No Indo-Indonesian bilateral trade talks were held recently at the Government level. However, the 4th meeting of the Indo-Indonesian Joint Business Council and Seminar on "Trade and Investment Opportunities between India & Indonesia" was held on 18th November, 1993 in New Delhi, when trade and investment opportunities between the two countries were discussed.

National Commission for Labour

*56. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE:

SHRI KAMAL MORARKA:

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to set up National Commission for Labour;

(b) if so, by when the Commission is likely to be set up; and

(c) whether the Commission, when set up, is also likely to consider productivity linked wage regime?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI P. A. SANGMA): (a) to (c) In the Indian Labour Conference held in September, 1992, representatives of Certain Central trade unions had suggested constitution of a Second National Commission on Labour. The matter is under examination.

*57. [*Transferred to 10th December, 1993*]

Representations on 'Dunkel Draft'

*58. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have received representations on 'Dunkel Draft' expressing concern at India's surrendering its options for asking for renegotiations in the matter, as reported in "The Hindustan Times" dated 25th November, 1993 under the caption "Prime Minister cautioned on Dunkel Draft";

(b) if so, details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that acceptance of the Dunkel draft as such would mean a grave setback to India's efforts at self-reliant economic growth, particularly in critical branches like seed production, food processing, drugs, energy, feed stock; chemicals and branches of industrial biotechnology; and

(d) if so, whether Government propose to consult all concerned industrialists/economists in this matter including political parties before signing the Dunkel draft or making any commitment with respect thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) It has reported that prominent citizens have written to the PM urging him to discuss the Dunkel draft in the winter session of Parliament since in their view acceptance of Uruguay Round results will lead to serious adverse repercussions on various sectors of the economy.

The letter has expressed concern regarding the un-satisfactory nature of the provisions of the Draft Final Act in the areas of TRIPs, Services and Textiles.

(c) and (d) Government is negotiating various Uruguay Round issues keeping in mind inputs received during consultations with industry associations, economists, political parties, and the discussions held in Parliament. A Government motion for a discussion on the implications of the Dunkel draft has also been admitted in the current session of Parliament. There have been differing views on the implications of the Dunkel draft. As regards the apprehension that acceptance of the provisions regarding intellectual property rights may harm production of critical items in the country, it is by now accepted by most trading nations that a system for the protection of intellectual property rights is needed as an incentive to encourage in ovative research and development effort essential for development. At the same time Government recognized that it is necessary to strike a balance between the rights of the LPR holder and the larger public interest.

Rising Prices of edible oil

*59. SHRI TRILOKI NATH CHATURVEDI :

DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI :

Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware of the steadily rising prices of edible oil in the country; if so, what are the month-wise retail price of edible oil in 1993 as compared with 1992;

(b) whether Government have permitted the export of edible oil and oilseeds; if so, the quantity and value thereof in 1993; and

(c) what steps have been taken to protect the interests of the domestic consumers ?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI A. K. ANTONY): (a) Monthwise retail prices of major edible oils namely groundnut oil and Mustard oil have been lower in 1993 as compared to 1992, except in the month of October in respect of groundnut oil prices at Bombay centre.

The monthwise retail prices of groundnut oil and mustard oil for 1992 and 1993 are annexed as a statement (*See* below).

(b) Government has permitted export of certain seeds such as safflower seed, sesame seed, mustard seed, etc. Recently export of edible oils (except groundnut oil) in consumer packs up to 5 Kgs has also been allowed.

The quantity and value of oilseeds exported in the financial year 1993-94 (till September 1993) are 44,331 MT and Rs. 76.50 crores respectively. (Source—Solvent Extractors Association of India). It is understood that export of edible oils namely mustard oil, sesame oil is yet to materialise.

(c) The quantity so far exported is too negligible to affect the interest of the domestic consumers. The Government will take appropriate steps as and when the situation demands to review the export of edible oils and oilseeds.